



# NEWS RELEASE

## Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts

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March 14, 2001

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### **Judicial Conference Adopts Strategy to Improve Pay for Top Government Officials**

The Judicial Conference of the United States today voted to pursue vigorously a three-part plan for improving the compensation of judges and other high level federal officials. At its semiannual meeting in Washington, the Conference agreed to seek:

1. An Employment Cost Index (ECI) adjustment for federal judges, members of Congress, and top officials in the executive branch for 2002 and subsequent years, as provided by law.
2. Legislation to give judges and other high level federal officials a "catch-up" pay adjustment of 9.6 percent to recapture previous ECI adjustments that were not provided.
3. Appointment of a Presidential commission to consider and make recommendations to the President on appropriate salaries for high-level officials in all three branches of government.

According to a report by the Conference's Judicial Branch Committee, the real pay or purchasing power of judges has declined more than 13 percent since January 1993 due to inflation and the denial of annual ECI adjustments. At the same time, the salaries of private sector lawyers have skyrocketed, with some first-year lawyers at major firms earning more than federal judges with 30 years' experience.

In his 2000 year-end report on the Judiciary, Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist discussed the problems of pay erosion, pay comparability, and the effect on judges' morale, recruitment, and retention. He called the need to increase judges' pay "the most pressing issue facing the Judiciary today." The President's annual salary was doubled from \$200,000 to \$400,000 in January, while the pay of high level federal officials, including judges, has stagnated.

(MORE)

In other business, today the Conference honored Representative Harold Rogers of Kentucky, who has served in Congress for 20 years and as chairman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on the Departments of Commerce, Justice, State, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies from 1995 to 2000. A resolution is to be presented to Chairman Rogers by the Chief Justice of the United States at a March 14 reception at the Supreme Court. The resolution states in part:

*“Representative Rogers has recognized the critical value of an independent federal judiciary in our system of government. He ensured that the federal courts were continuously provided with the resources necessary to keep pace with burgeoning caseloads and expanding jurisdiction. He also vigorously supported improvements in the administration of justice through the courts’ use of automation and through his endorsement of numerous other initiatives that have made the federal courts more efficient, thereby providing improved service to the public.*

*The legacy of Representative Harold Rogers, as a Member of Congress, as a Subcommittee Chairman, and as a valued friend to the federal judiciary will endure for many years to come.”*

The Judicial Conference of the United States is the principal policy-making body for the federal court system. The Chief Justice serves as the presiding officer of the Conference, which is composed of the chief judges of the 13 courts of appeals, a district judge from each of the 12 geographic circuits, and the chief judge of the Court of International Trade. The Conference meets twice a year to consider administrative and policy issues affecting the court system and to make recommendations to Congress concerning legislation involving the Judicial Branch. A list of Conference members is attached.

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# JUDICIAL CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED STATES

March 2001

## Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist, Presiding

Chief Judge Juan R. Torruella Chief Judge D. Brock Hornby	First Circuit District of Maine
Chief Judge John M. Walker, Jr. Judge Charles P. Sifton	Second Circuit Eastern District of New York
Chief Judge Edward R. Becker Chief Judge Sue L. Robinson	Third Circuit Delaware
Chief Judge J. Harvie Wilkinson III Chief Judge Charles H. Haden II	Fourth Circuit Southern District of West Virginia
Chief Judge Carolyn Dineen King Judge Hayden W. Head, Jr.	Fifth Circuit Southern District of Texas
Chief Judge Boyce F. Martin, Jr. Judge Thomas A. Wiseman, Jr.	Sixth Circuit Middle District of Tennessee
Chief Judge Joel M. Flaum Chief Judge Marvin E. Aspen	Seventh Circuit Northern District of Illinois
Chief Judge Roger L. Wollman Judge James M. Rosenbaum	Eighth Circuit District of Minnesota
Chief Judge Mary M. Schroeder Judge Judith N. Keep	Ninth Circuit Southern District of California
Chief Judge Deanell R. Tacha Chief Judge Frank Howell Seay	Tenth Circuit Eastern District of Oklahoma
Chief Judge R. Lanier Anderson Chief Judge Charles R. Butler, Jr.	Eleventh Circuit Southern District of Alabama
Chief Judge Harry T. Edwards Judge Thomas F. Hogan *	District of Columbia Circuit District of Columbia
Chief Judge Haldane Robert Mayer	Federal Circuit
Chief Judge Gregory W. Carman	Court of International Trade

Conference Secretary:

Leonidas Ralph Mecham, Director  
Administrative Office of U.S. Courts

\* By designation.